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What the poor need most from the well-to-do and cultured classes is not more neighborliness, but better citizenship; not so much an altruism of volunteer personal service, as an income altruism that will create more favorable conditions of living.¹⁷

One came sooner or later to the time when one had to take down one's own case,—one's own shortcomings and failures. . . . These poorer neighbors might be partly of our own making.¹⁸

There is much in the proposals of the Minority about which I cannot be sanguine. I do not hope much, for example, from 'training and maintenance' for adult men and women. But the Minority do appeal to us in our collective capacity to strain ourselves to the utmost in the great enterprises of fighting disease at its source and of regularizing employment. If this part of its program could, in any substantial degree, be realized, I believe we should liberate resources of character and intelligence greater beyond all question than the encroachment it involves upon the liberty of the patient and the employer.

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GOETHE'S INFLUENCE ON CARLYLE.

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I.

OF all the friendships between great men none has a more peculiar and touching beauty than the friendship between Goethe and Carlyle, between the old, serene philosopher and poet, the honored genius of the gracious little Court at Weimar, and the young, unknown, stormy-hearted prophet of the North, sprung from peasants and a Puritan to the core.

That Goethe's influence upon Carlyle was deep and abiding there can be no doubt: but it is not altogether

¹⁷ Professor Patten.

¹⁸ W. G. Martley.

easy to grasp exactly what it was. Neither of the men expressed his views in anything approaching a definitely articulated system, Carlyle perhaps even less than Goethe, and the obvious differences between the two seem to block our way with paradoxes. Yet, on Carlyle's own confession, Goethe was the teacher who brought him from darkness to light; a confession most believable by all those readers,—and they are many,—who, as they study Goethe, feel, as Arnold felt, "This man understood all the sicknesses of the modern world and had the secret of their cure." "Werter," "Faust,"—the Second Part as much as the First,—and the two parts of "Wilhelm Meister," are perhaps the three works in which this secret is most to be sought; and we know from Carlyle himself that it was in these, especially in "Wilhelm Meister," that he found the nourishment he was hungering for.

"Werter" is very easy to misunderstand; on a first reading it seems, at best, no more than a pathological study of craving, and indeed its significance is really bound up with the fact that it is a diagnosis of the disease. But "Werter" is not only a record of the wail over the unsatisfied thirst for infinite,—that is, unlimited,—happiness: its greatness lies in going deeper, in discerning that this boundless thirst itself proceeds essentially from a soul which demands the infinite in quite another sense, demands, that is to say, to employ itself upon a work which can be seen to be of absolute value. To Goethe, as to Carlyle, nothing that man did or experienced could be satisfactory unless he were assured that it was *good*, over and above the pleasure that it afforded him. It is the thirst for an absolute standard, for objective values, that is really at the bottom of Werter's misery, as it was at the bottom of all Goethe's struggles and of all Carlyle's. The trouble with Werter is not just that he cannot, under the iron laws of human existence, obtain unlimited stores of passive enjoyment: that trouble, of course, is there, but there is something

more behind; there is the obscure sense that mere enjoyment would never satisfy him, even if he could get it all, and in looking for it he is looking for what his soul would reject did he find it. A whole universe of such 'pleasure' could not make a single shoeblack happy, simply because enjoyment *as such* depends solely on the temperament of the enjoyer, and is thus, *as such*, nothing but the subjective fancy, nothing but appearance, and man's thirst is for something more.

Now to Goethe and to Carlyle, the conceptions of the Whole, the Good, the True, and the Beautiful, were on an entirely different footing from the conception of Pleasure. Bound up in those lay the reference to an objective standard, to something that in some sense always *was*, whether man perceived it or not. In what sense it *was* is a question to which we shall return in the second part of this essay. The first step for Carlyle, in thought as in life, was to fix "on some unchangeable basis, to discover what the Germans call the *Urwahr*, the Primitive Truth, the necessarily, absolutely, and eternally *True*." ("State of German Literature," 1827. Critical Essays, Vol. I, p. 67.)

Without some such basis as this, man found that

"where the Tree of Life once bloomed and brought fruit of goodliest savour, there was only barrenness and desolation. To such as could find sufficient interest in the day-labour and day-wages of earthly existence; in the resources of the five bodily Senses and of Vanity, . . . matters were still not so bad. Such men helped themselves forward, as they will generally do; and found the world, if not an altogether proper sphere (for every man, disguise it as he may, has a *soul* in him), at least a tolerable enough place. . . . But to men afflicted with the 'malady of Thought' some devoutness of temper was an inevitable heritage: to such the noisy forum of the world could appear but an empty, altogether insufficient concern, and the whole scene of life had become hopeless enough. . . . That state of unbelief from which the Germans do seem to be in some measure delivered, still presses with incubus force on the larger part of Europe; and nation after nation, each in its own way, feels that the first of all moral problems is how to cast it off, or how to rise above it. Governments naturally attempt the first expedient; Philosophers in general the second." (*Goethe*, 1828, C. E., Vol. I, p. 188.)

Now this passage immediately precedes what Carlyle has to say about "Werter," and, however great the superficial differences between the love-lorn Werter and the struggling Sartor of the "Everlasting No," Carlyle himself recognized the essential community in "that nameless Unrest, the blind struggle of a soul in bondage, that high, sad, longing Discontent," which "had driven Goethe almost to despair."

"Werter" indeed "prescribes no remedy," but the remedy was given later, Carlyle believed, and from the same hand; though it was years later, and after "a far different, far harder enterprise." And in that remedy one essential element was what Carlyle loved to call Belief, the conviction that man could discern eternal values over and above his own mere pleasure. This belief in the Eternal was indispensable for any action worth the doing, and this belief was possible. There was that in man which could discern between the higher and the lower, between the joy of heroes, and the joy of hogs-wash, that could see a brave man die and say: *So stirbt ein Held, anbetungsvoll*, and choose a heroic death with rapture, rather than a "whole Lubberland of Apostasy." Carlyle's hatred of Utilitarianism rose from the conviction that, according to its current formulas, there was no scale of absolute worth at all. Mere amount of individual pleasure being the standard, whatever the kind, man was shut up to what pleased him, and him alone. Hence there was nothing left but vanity, the feeding of the limited self, and the canker of vanity was that it imprisoned the soul in its mere identity, whereas the very essence of the true self was to rejoice in something worthy to be worshiped over and above itself. Devoutness of temper, on the other hand, the breath of life to Carlyle, meant the respect for something which, however closely the self might be united with it, was more than the self: respect for a law which, however willingly it might be followed, was more than the will.¹

¹ The last phrase is borrowed from an unpublished lecture of Professor Gwatkin's.

Carlyle was not concerned to demonstrate that this must be so; it was not for nothing that he chose the words 'Faith' and 'Belief' for his watchwords. His was not a metaphysical mind, and it was enough for him that he caught fire from Goethe's own life-long conviction that man was in direct touch with truths that were vaster than his perception of them. It was enough for him to nourish his soul on the passion of Faust's *Wer darf ihn nennen?* "Who dare name Him? Who dare name Him not? The All-embracer, the All-sustainer," imaged forth in the living visible garment of God (*der Gottheit lebendiges Kleid*), in the eternal 'open secret,' open in the light of day, and yet wrapped about with mystery (*geheimnisvoll am lichten Tag*), floating round every man, seen and unseen at once, entering into heart and head with irresistible might and unavoidable love.

And it was from Goethe of all men that Carlyle won courage to trust his own intuitive belief that the eternal laws of right and wrong were somehow reflected in Nature. From first to last Goethe scorned any other conception of the natural world. The eyes of the eternal stars that the young Faust saw looking down on man in kindness are seen watching over the march of humanity in the Mason's hymn, the hymn that succored Carlyle from youth to age, the marching music of mankind, as he called it in his Rectorial Address to the lads of Edinburgh University in 1866. That there was no sympathy between Man and Nature, that the inner spirit of Nature was closed to the spirit of Man,—the old Goethe, so he tells us himself, had listened to that whine for sixty years, but never ceased to curse it under his breath. Nature was no stepmother in his eyes, her soul lay in the soul of Man, to him she gave gladly and in full measure, pressed down and running over.² "And he felt as if Death and Life were one, as if the Earth were not dead, as if the Spirit of the Earth had its throne in that splen-

² From the poem *Allerding's in Gott und Welt*.

dour, and his own spirit were therewith holding communion" ("Sartor," II, 6). It is Wordsworth's teaching, but it was also Goethe's, and it was from Goethe that Carlyle learned it.

The 'Poetic Vision' which could discern this union and perceive these values was, as it were, the courier which kept the path between the finite and the infinite always open, and it dwelt in every man whatsoever. It was free and awake in the heroes, fettered and slumbering in the mass, but it could no more perish in any heart than Faust could really sell his soul to the Devil, try as he would. "In all his dark wanderings, man remembers the right way still." Mephistopheles thinks he can satisfy a man with dust, but "God knows better" (Faust, "Prolog im Himmel"). "It is not to taste sweet things; but to do noble and true things and vindicate himself under God's Heaven as a God-made Man, that the poorest son of Adam dimly longs. Show him the way of doing that, the dullest day-drudge kindles into a hero." ("Heroes," Lect. II.)

For such insight into the way and the goal Carlyle, as I have said, would use the term Belief. This, no doubt, was partly because he held that man could have an effective hold on something he had not yet fully grasped with his intellect,—though grasp it the intellect could,—but it was also because he felt very strongly the direct, 'immediate' character of the perception involved. A perception of ultimate value, just because it is ultimate, cannot be deduced from anything else, cannot be transferred from man to man by any process of logic-chopping; can only be evoked in the soul, or grow up in it, cannot be given to it, or forced upon it. "This is Belief; all else is Opinion,—for which latter whoso will, let him worry and be worried" ("Sartor," II, ix).

But it could grow up in every man through action itself, and be evoked through the confident appeal of him in whom it was free. To make that appeal was, perhaps, the greatest service one man could render another.

Greater still than the destruction of Superstition was the building of the new Temple. The man who discerned another side of the *valore infinito*, he above all deserved well of his fellows. "I will listen to any man's beliefs: bring me no doubts, I have plenty of my own" (Goethe). "Cease, my much-respected Herr von Voltaire, shut thy sweet voice; for the task appointed thee seems finished. . . . Wilt thou help us to embody the divine Spirit of that Religion in a new Mythus? . . . What! Thou hast no faculty in that kind? Only a torch for burning, no hammer for building? Take our thanks then, and—thyself away" ("Sartor," II, ix).

This belief could be nourished by action, because it was essentially a perception of value, and values could only become definite to us through definite embodiment in act. They must be clothed in order for us to see them. Neither Carlyle nor Goethe was afraid of the apparent circle in this conviction that belief was at once the basis of action and the reward of it. "Doubt of all kinds can only be removed by action," was written in "Wilhelm Meister," and Carlyle more than forty years after translating that, wrote thus in his "Journal" (June, 1870):

He that still doubts whether his sense of right and wrong is a revelation from the Most High, I would recommend him . . . to do silently, with more and more of pious earnestness, what said sense *dictates* to him as right. . . . By pious heroic climbing of your own, . . . do you at length reach the sanctuary,—the victorious summit,—and see with your own eyes. The prize of heroic labour, suffering, and performance this.

But Goethe's work and Carlyle's lesson by no means end here. So far, as it would seem, they both lie open to the charge of entire vagueness, the charge so often brought against Carlyle, and if it were so, they would not help us much.³ Unless we could discern, here and now, *some* definite character in the infinite goal of desire,

³ In one sense it is true that a margin of vagueness,—let us rather say, a wide, dim horizon,—was really involved in their conception of the Infinite, but of this later. Rightly understood, I believe it to be one of the factors that make their teaching so inspiring.

the standard we had hoped for would be for us illusory. Such a character Carlyle and Goethe did believe themselves to discern. Man could never be satisfied, they held, with anything short of spiritual activity in the service of other men. Activity of the spirit, that, so far as one phrase can express it, is the dominating conception of Goethe and Carlyle.⁴ *Thätig zu sein ist der Menschen erste Bestimmung* ("Wilhelm Meister," Part II, Bk. vi). The conception recalls Aristotle's, and it may be that both Carlyle and Goethe were aware of this, though I do not know that there is anything decisive in their writings. Goethe uses Aristotelian language, though language that goes far beyond Aristotle, when he bases his hope of immortality on his consciousness of activity (an argument which of itself shows how central this consciousness was). "The conviction that our life continues springs for me from the conception of activity; for, if I work without ceasing to the end, nature is bound to assign me another form of existence when the present one no longer suffices for my spirit."⁵ Carlyle deliberately cites Aristotle for the dictum that "the end of man is an action, not a thought" ("Journal," Dec., 7, 1826. Froude's Life.)

Of course this would be absurd misrepresentation of

⁴ See "Goethe Reviewed After Sixty Years," by Seeley, ch. viii. Much of what follows is based on that splendid essay.

⁵ J. Bode, "Meine Religion, von J. W. v. Goethe," translated by G. Lowes Dickinson, Ingersoll Lecture on Immortality. There is a pathetic echo of this joyous confidence in Carlyle's Journal near the end, October 14, 1869. There too we see how it is the active spirit seeking the Absolute that at once demands and seems to promise immortality. Carlyle is writing of how he had been looking at the stars, and "it struck me with a strange new kind of feeling. Hah! in a little while I shall have seen you also for the last time. God Almighty's own Theatre of Immensity, the Infinite made palpable and visible to me, that also will be closed, flung to in my face, and I shall never behold that either any more. And I know so little of it, real as was my effort and desire to know. . . . And then a second feeling rose in me, 'What if Omnipotence should actually have said, 'Yes, poor mortals, such of you as have gone so far shall be permitted to go farther. Hope, despair not!' " *Wir heissen euch hoffen.* " The old great line of the Maurer-Loge rang in his head once more.

Aristotle if 'action' were restricted, as the vulgar might restrict it, to crass material doings, but Carlyle means what Aristotle meant, that the goal is not to leave an ideal unrealized, but to embody it in an active consciousness. And the activity was to be of a certain kind: it was to aim at the true, the beautiful, the loving.

Neither Carlyle nor Goethe goes about to establish these beliefs by ordinary argument. If Carlyle were confronted by a rival judgment of value,—by the assertion, say, that right perception declared universal pleasure, whatever its further quality, to be the only rational goal of effort,—he would meet it, as the scornful laughter of his "Pig Philosophy" shows, simply by taking the ideal proposed, vivifying it, setting it before the consciousness of man, and asking: "Is that what you, in your heart of hearts, really think *ought* to be?" And it is hard to see what other procedure is possible, when it comes to a question of ultimate values. Goethe's method is at bottom the same. In "Faust," as in "Wilhelm Meister," he exhibits the soul wandering through a long "Odyssey of the spirit," trying every life, unsatisfied with any that does not involve work.

Compared with work both Goethe and Carlyle scouted enjoyment and emotion. "The only happiness a brave man ever troubled himself with asking much about was happiness enough to get his work done. . . . Happiness, unhappiness, all that was but the *wages* thou hadst; . . . and now thy work, where is thy work? Swift, out with it; let us see thy work!" ("Past and Present," Bk III, ch. 4.) It is in the same spirit that Goethe turned on Eckermann when he told him some one had said of his portrait, "That is the face of a man who has suffered much." "Say rather," answered Goethe, and with some indignation, "of a man who has struggled hard." It is true that Carlyle in his stern enthusiasm sometimes wrote,—and here he may seem in sharp opposition to Goethe,—as though enjoyment in itself were to be scouted utterly, but this is not really involved in his position, and

to show that he did not always slip into the puritanic fallacy, even at the end of his life, I may quote a serene passage from his "Rectorial Address": "You should always look at the *heilig*, which means 'holy' as well as 'healthy.' And that old etymology,—what a lesson it is against certain gloomy, austere, ascetic people, who have gone about as if this world were all a dismal prison-house! . . . Piety does not mean that a man should make a sour face about things, and refuse to enjoy wisely what his Maker has given " ("C. E.," Vol. VII).

For Goethe, indeed, such refusal was actually a sin, and when it led to stagnation, one of the worst of sins. But it was only the abstinence "which leads to nothing and aims at nothing" that Goethe hated, as Seeley shows in his fine treatment of this point (*op. cit.*, ch. 7), and such abstinence is always "contrasted with a life not of luxury, but of strenuous energy." Like Carlyle, Goethe invariably scouted the purely passive enjoyment that enervates the soul, makes man into "a stomach and not a soul," enjoyment against which the stifled spirit protests vainly, "the expense of spirit in a waste of shame." The essence of the old Faust legend lies in the conception that man risks his very soul by the ravenous grasp at enjoyment of any and every kind, and it was this conception that attracted Goethe.⁶

Goethe, it may be answered here, thought lightly of sins of the flesh, and perhaps that is true: but it is much truer,—and much more important to realize,—that he thought anything but lightly of the fundamental sin of craving for enjoyment at any price. That is the sin of magic, as it is the sin of lust, the sin that Faust sinned at the beginning and that pursues him to the end: he

⁶ In the old story this element of lust is typified, in its most glorious and attractive form, by this union of Faust with Helen. In Goethe's drama that episode takes on a different character; there it is transformed into a symbol of union with the Spirit of Beauty in Life and Art; but its old place is filled by the pitiless devouring element in Faust's passion for Gretchen.

does not win his release until with a last desperate effort he struggles to unlearn once and forever the magic spell, *die Zaubersprüche ganz und gar verlernen*. Not to escape by magic is the essence of the warning he gives to his own soul at the approach of Care, that insidious spirit of life-weariness which can drive a man to any drug. It comes to the old Faust, as it came to the youthful (and as no doubt it came to the old Goethe), but he escapes from it by work, and not by enjoyment. And as he braces himself for the struggle he looks back on his past life and sees it wasted in the emptiness of craving:

Ich bin nur durch die Welt gerannt:
Ein jed' Gelüst ergriff ich bei den Haaren,
Was nicht genügte liess ich fahren,—
Ich habe nur begehrt und nur vollbracht.

Thus, seeing that one form of enjoyment, and one only, and that the spiritual, can satisfy man, while many allure him, he has to recognize that he must refrain, renounce, deny himself, and Carlyle did well to insist that renunciation was really the keystone in Goethe's structure. Strange that the man who took the Christian name of *die Entsagenden*, "Those who renounce," as the motto for his Meister's *Wanderjahre*, should have been decried as a mere pagan and nothing more!

At the same time, it must be remembered that in a sense Goethe did think lightly of all sins, simply because he held that the soul of man could rise above them all. It is of set purpose that he makes the soul of his Faust be carried up to heaven by angels immediately after it has stained itself once more by a black deed against an innocent neighbor. Carlyle, old Puritan though he was, had the same large toleration. He also knew how often sin is only mistake, as Socrates thought it always was. Let a man once clearly see his true good, he *must* follow it. Carlyle, like Goethe, had faith in Byron that he would come to see that "his Corsairs and Harolds were not true" ("State of German Lit," C. E., I, p. 59);

“not true,” that is, because they did not correspond with the eternal standard of right that man was seeking for, even when he did not know it. The Corsairs and the Harolds may fancy that what they want is passion and success, but it is not: what they want is noble work. So in the song at the end of *Faust*, the angels call on the Vision of the Truth to heal the man who was damned himself. This it can do, because, after all, the man has never ceased to struggle and to love. At bottom he himself is Truth, as Novalis might have said. And therefore the fiery roses of the eternal love, dropping thick and soft from the sky, while they only torture Mephistopheles with barren desire, turn into the clearness of truth for *Faust*:

Wendet zur Klarheit
Euch, liebende Flammen,
Die sich verdammen
Heile die Wahrheit!

But renunciation, when all is said, is only negative, and Carlyle was thirsting for something positive. How he found what he wanted in the writings of Goethe must be set out in the second part of this essay.

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IDEALISM AND THE CONCEPTION OF FORGIVENESS.*

J. W. SCOTT.

ONE of the supreme tests of a *Weltanschauung* is the light it is able to throw upon the regulating conceptions of the moral life, especially at a moment when advancing experience threatens to entangle them in fresh difficulties. The difficulties which I wish now to bring

* The substance of a paper read to the mid-winter meeting of the Scots Philosophical Club.